

AHTD JOB CA0604

**HIGHWAY 67:
MAIN ST.-VANDENBERG BLVD.
(WIDENING)(S)**



LOCATION & DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING INFORMATION

Open Forum Location & Design Public Hearing
Jacksonville Community Center
May 25, 2017

AHTD Connecting Arkansas Program
4701 Northshore Dr.
North Little Rock, AR 72218



For more information, call (501) 255-1519
or email info@ConnectingArkansasProgram.com

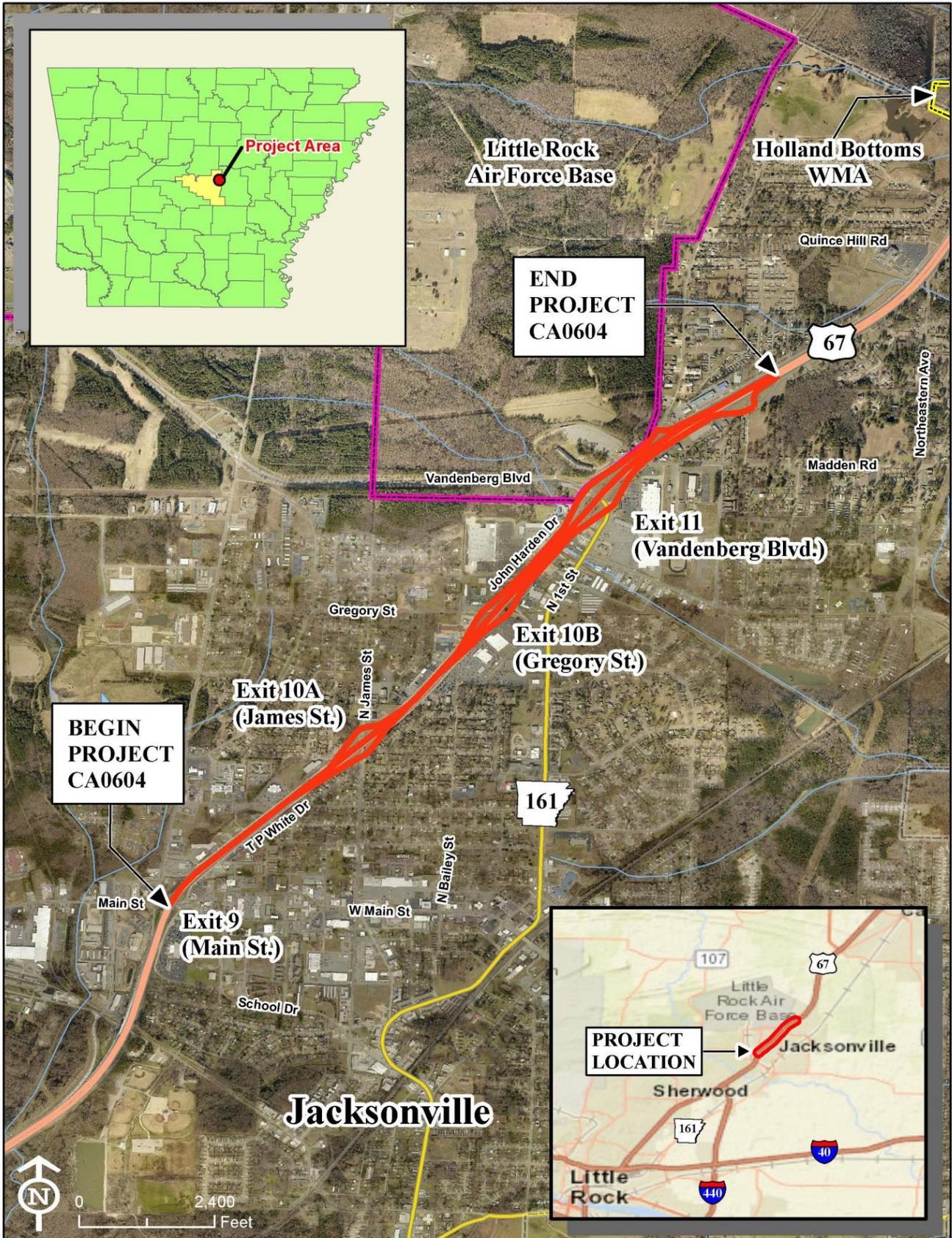


U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Arkansas State Highway &
Transportation Department



Figure 1 - Project Area



Location & Design Public Hearing Information

Welcome to the Location & Design Public Hearing for Job CA0604: MAIN ST.-VANDENBERG BLVD.(WIDENING)(S). Your attendance and participation are greatly appreciated!

1 What is the purpose of this Location & Design Public Hearing?

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) holds public hearings to ensure that the alternative selected and the design of the project are consistent with the goals and objectives of the project and the AHTD. In order to meet this goal, public participation is needed to identify, discuss, and resolve any problems or controversial issues. AHTD Connecting Arkansas Program (CAP) personnel are also available in person to answer questions and explain the project and its impacts.

2 What is the Highway 67 widening project?

The AHTD is proposing to improve approximately 2.25 miles of Highway 67 between Main Street and Vandenberg Boulevard, including interchange improvements at James Street and Vandenberg Boulevard along with a grade separation at Gregory Street in the City of Jacksonville, Pulaski County, as seen in Figure 1.

3 What is the purpose of this project?

The purpose of this project is to address existing and increasing traffic congestion and high crash rates on Highway 67 and associated interchanges and frontage roads.

4 What are the alternatives?

No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would provide only routine maintenance for Highway 67 in the project area. The No Action Alternative would not address traffic congestion, operations or safety concerns presented in the Environmental Assessment (EA). These problems would increase as traffic volumes in the corridor continue to grow.

Build Alternative

The Build Alternative includes system-wide improvements necessary to improve the traffic flow and safety of this corridor. These improvements include the widening of the Highway 67 main lanes from four to six lanes, conversion of the northbound and southbound frontage roads from two-way traffic to one-way traffic, and providing access back to the frontage roads and adjacent properties as a result of this conversion.

5 What is the project area like today?

The proposed project is located in the City of Jacksonville, Pulaski County, approximately 13 miles northeast of downtown Little Rock. Jacksonville is part of the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway Metropolitan Statistical Area. In 2014, Jacksonville’s population was 28,364. Jacksonville has a total area of approximately 28 square miles and is home to the Little Rock Air Force Base.

The terrain in the project area ranges from gently rolling hills in the northwest to flat, low-lying areas in the southeast. Land use includes residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. There is little undeveloped land along this section of Highway 67.

Highway 67

Highway 67 is a 1,560 mile long north-south U. S. highway that begins in Presidio, Texas and ends in Sabula, Iowa.

In Arkansas, the Highway 67 corridor is approximately 280 miles in length. The highway begins at the Texas border in Texarkana and ends at the Missouri border near Corning, passing through Hope, Benton, Little Rock, Jacksonville, Cabot, Beebe, Searcy, Walnut Ridge, and Pocahontas. Highway 67 is designated by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) as a STRAHNET Connector between I-40, to the south, and the Little Rock Air Force Base at Vandenberg Boulevard.

Interchanges

The project area, as shown on Figure 1, includes the improvements to the James Street and Vandenberg Boulevard interchanges, the Gregory Street grade separation, and conversion of frontage roads to one way that run parallel to Highway 67.

What is STRAHNET?

The Strategic Highway Network, or STRAHNET, is a network of highways which are important to the United States' strategic defense policy and which provide defense access, continuity and emergency capabilities for defense purposes.

STRAHNET Connectors are highways which provide access between major military installations (the Little Rock Air Force Base) and highways which are part of the Strategic Highway Network (Interstate 40 south of the project area). The project area is the beneficial and adverse impacts of build alternatives and determine their significance.

The interchanges play a large role in keeping traffic flowing safely by providing access to major roads in the area and to the frontage roads. Main and James Streets provide access to residential communities located off of T. P. White Drive. James and Gregory Streets provide access to medical facilities and residential areas. Vandenberg Boulevard provides access to Little Rock Air Force Base. These local roads are functionally classified as minor arterials and deliver traffic between local roads and Highway 67.

6 What has already been completed on the project?

An EA was approved by the Federal Highway Administration in April 2017 that discussed potential social, economic, and environmental impacts and determined if any of the impacts were significant. Copies of this documentation are available for review at this hearing or online on the AHTD website.

What were the EA findings?
 The EA did not identify any significant impacts to the natural or social environment as a result of either build alternative.

7 How would the completed project affect surrounding areas?

The environmental analysis of the proposed project did not identify any significant impacts to the natural and social environment as a result of the No Action Alternative or Build Alternative. A summary of the impacts of these alternatives can be found in Table 1.

The recommended Preferred Alternative for Highway 67 is the Build Alternative because it meets the project’s purpose and need while minimizing adverse impacts.

Where do I find out more about the environmental analysis?
 For more detail on these impacts or on other impact areas not discussed here, please ask an AHTD, CAP, or Consultant employee at this meeting to view the EA or download a digital copy on the AHTD website.

Table 1 - Alternative Impact Comparison

	No Action	Build
Utility Cost (2016 dollars)	0	11.5 million
Construction Cost (2016 dollars)	0	89 million
Right of Way Cost*(2016 dollars)	0	22.2 million
Total Project Cost (2016 dollars)	0	122.7 million
Proposed Right of Way (acres)	0	12.2
Number of Relocations	0	11
Noise Receptors Impacted (2041)	140	113
Stream Impacts (linear feet)	0	143

* Includes right of way acquisition costs, business and residential relocation costs.

8 What should I do if my property is being impacted?

The AHTD Right of Way Division has representatives available at this hearing to discuss how your property is being impacted and what to expect once a Selected Alternative is identified. No one will be required to surrender possession of their property until just compensation has been made. A detailed policy and procedures brochure is available at the Right of Way table at this hearing or through the AHTD Right of Way Division.

The initial step in the acquisition process is the property valuation. Once the valuation is prepared, reviewed and approved, a negotiator will contact the property owner by mail or in person to begin the negotiation process. If negotiations are successful, a Contract to Sell is executed and submitted for payment. Once the AHTD completes the title opinion and the deed is prepared, a closing agent will be in touch to get the deed signed and deliver the check. At this time, the state takes possession of the property.

For those cases where all efforts to negotiate are unsuccessful, the tract is submitted to the AHTD Legal Division to file condemnation. The appraisal amount is deposited in the court and the landowner may withdraw the funds placed on deposit without affecting their right to claim additional compensation.

9 What if my business would need to be relocated?

The relocation assistance program is intended to help offset expenses incurred by those who are displaced by federally-aided highway projects. This program provides advisory assistance and payments to help offset those expenses. Relocation assistance, which is separate from the compensation a person receives for real estate, comes in two basic forms — physical assistance and monetary assistance. In order to be eligible for relocation assistance and compensation, a person must be in occupancy at the initiation of negotiations for the property. The type of relocation payments one is eligible for depends on the type of displacee: owner, landlord, tenant, etc.

Relocation assistance and payments will be provided until all displacees have been relocated from the project. If a person is not satisfied with the amounts that have been offered as relocation compensation, an appeal may be filed and the case heard promptly and carefully reviewed by an AHTD Appeals Officer.

Relocation assistance brochures which explain payments and eligibility requirements are available at the Right of Way table at this hearing.

What is a relocation?

Relocations occur when a residence, business, or non-profit is impacted severely enough by a proposed project that they cannot continue to live or do business at their current location. This is usually due to the proposed right of way limits crossing a structure (house or business) or taking a majority of a business's parking.

10 How do I become involved?

Please register your attendance at the registration table. This will allow the AHTD CAP to keep you informed if there are any additional meetings scheduled to discuss this project.

Gather information, view the displays, and ask questions at your own pace and convenience. Personnel are on hand to assist you by answering questions about the project and providing pertinent information.

If you wish to make an oral statement about the project, you must have your comments recorded on tape at the recording station set up at the hearing. An AHTD CAP employee will be there to record your statement.

Written statements may also be submitted on the attached comment form and left in the drop box at the hearing, accepted at the office of the AHTD Connecting Arkansas Program, or submitted online at ConnectingArkansasProgram.com/67comments through 4:30 p.m., Friday, June 9, 2017.

11 What happens after this hearing?

After a review of comments received from citizens, public officials, and public agencies, the next step in the environmental process will be for the AHTD and FHWA to identify a Preferred Alternative based on the information contained in the EA and the comments received.

After the design is finalized, a Finding of No Significant Impact document will be prepared and signed by the FHWA, identifying the Selected Alternative and concluding the NEPA process. Right of way acquisition can then begin.

Comment forms can be mailed to:
AHTD Connecting Arkansas
Program
4701 Northshore Dr.
North Little Rock, AR 72118

Where can I get more information after the hearing?
Call: (501) 255-1519 or
Email:
info@ConnectingArkansasProgram.com

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ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT (AHTD)



CITIZEN COMMENT FORM

AHTD JOB NUMBER CA0604
MAIN ST. – VANDENBERG BLVD. (WIDENING) (HWY. 67)
PULASKI COUNTY

Make your comments on this form and leave it with AHTD Connecting Arkansas Program personnel at the meeting or mail it within 15 days to: AHTD Connecting Arkansas Program, Attn: Jon Hetzel, 4701 Northshore Drive, North Little Rock, AR 72118.
Email: Info@ConnectingArkansasProgram.com.

Comment forms may also be filled out and submitted online within 15 days at:
<http://ConnectingArkansasProgram.com/67comments>.

Which alternative do you prefer? (Please choose one.)

No Action Alternative

Build Alternative

It is often necessary for the AHTD to contact property owners along potential routes. If you are a property owner along or adjacent to the route under consideration, please provide information below. Thank you.

Name : *(Please Print)* _____

Address: _____ Phone: (____) _____--_____

E-mail: _____

Please make additional comments here. _____

For additional information, please visit our website at
www.ConnectingArkansasProgram.com